

# St. George Co-op Preschool



## Family Handbook

Last Updated on April 10, 2024

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St. George Co-op Preschool  
50 Beverly St E, P.O. Box 353,  
St. George ON  
N0E 1N0  
519-448-1835  
<http://www.stgeorgepreschool.ca>

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## Introduction

**St. George Co-Op Preschool** is a *co-operative/not-for-profit* childcare centre located at 50 Beverly St. E in St. George and was established in 1973.

We are committed to providing a safe and stimulating environment where each child can strive socially, physically, emotionally, and intellectually. **St. George Co-Op Preschool's** program is designed to meet the needs of each child in an atmosphere, which fosters co-operation, responsibility and order.

Our preschool is run as a **co-operative** school—one where families and teachers work together to provide an enjoyable learning environment for the children. We stress the word “co-operative” because it is vital for the successful operation of the Centre. Family participation includes:

- helping with your child's class as a Participant, on a twice per month basis (depending on class size);
- volunteering for a committee or Board position;
- taking part in Centre activities such as cleanup, maintenance, fundraising, etc.

Families can also share ideas and/or feedback. We encourage you to contribute your ideas and talents to the school program.

## Program Statement

St. George Co-op Nursery School (SGCNS) is a part-time preschool situated downstairs in a beautiful church at the Eastern end of the idyllic town of St. George. The school was started as a co-operative to provide families with an unmatched opportunity to participate and engage in this next chapter of their children's lives and education. For many of our children this will be their first experience being cared for and educated outside of the family unit. The co-operative is committed to creating a close community and an educational environment that embodies the core values and traditions of each co-op family. Our philosophy is to encourage our children's social, emotional, and intellectual growth in a safe, secure learning environment. SGCNS is also committed to implementing current educational best practices and following all legislation that pertains to the educational guidelines. We believe that children are competent, capable, curious, and rich in potential. This program statement will outline the goals and framework of our program, outline roles and responsibilities of students, parents, and instructors, as well as highlight the preschool's philosophy and policy, such as family participation and student behaviour management.

St. George Co-op Preschool is uniquely able to optimize the four foundational conditions that support learning; *belonging, well-being, engagement, and expression*. As a co-op preschool we invite parent volunteers to aid in daily preparation as well as volunteer within the classroom. We aim to provide a comfortable environment for our students where their families are not only welcome but vital to the day to day operations of the classroom. Parents each provide their own skills and experiences, which enrich the preschool generally and the daily learning experience specifically. Having their own parents/family members occasionally in the classroom provides the children with an immediate sense of belonging and well-being. This allows the students to begin from a place of calm and comfort, an optimal environment to facilitate learning. The instructor is relieved of many housekeeping duties, allowing the instructor to focus primarily on the engagement of the students. This greater engagement has a positive effect on programming as the instructor is able to gain a deeper knowledge of each student's strengths and interests and is able to constantly adjust programming accordingly. Having two Registered Early Childhood Educators in the classroom with staff support and occasional volunteers allows more adults to be actively engaged with different groups of students throughout the classroom simultaneously. With this greater level of engagement students are provided many opportunities for self expression verbally, developing their complex communication skills as well as providing a multitude of opportunities for expression through creativity, problem solving and mathematical behaviours.

For many of our child students, their time at St. George Co-op Preschool will provide their first exposure to formal education. From their first day in class students will be treated as curious, capable individuals with an unlimited potential for learning and developing. Each student's strengths, abilities and interests will be considered to create the most beneficial programming possible. We know that young children learn through play and inquiry. Our day is outlined with a lot of free time play, both indoors and outdoors, where the children can be learners in the environment, following what interests them.

Parents are vital members of our co-op community. Parents enter the co-op community with a variety of backgrounds and skills that enhance and diversify the co-op. Parents are encouraged to utilize their skills and interests and offer them to the service and betterment of the co-op through discussion with the instructor and executive board. Our instructors, Miss Sarah and Miss Kelly, are highly skilled educators, specializing in preschool aged children and committed to the co-operative values of the preschool. Miss Sarah and Miss Kelly are interested in participating as a co-learner with the children and families and to support children's learning, development, health, and well-being. Miss Sarah and Miss Kelly outline the programming through their experience, knowledge of curriculum and specifically linking to the goals of the co-op families for their children. Miss Sarah and Miss Kelly can tailor the programming based on the skills and interests of the children. We recognize that all students come with different interests and different learning strategies. We help to create a positive learning space where all our students' learning and development will be supported. Our co-op preschool community is specifically interested in school readiness, so Miss Sarah and Miss Kelly uses their opportunities for focused lessons on these skills such as self-dressing, printing child's own name, as well as early literacy and numeracy skills. It has been their experience that the play-based approach to early learning provides many opportunities for development of these skills in an organic way, through engaged activities such as dress-up, colouring, crafts, and story time.

Our goal at St. George Co-op Preschool is for all students to feel safe and secure in our preschool environment. To ensure this we set limits, for the safety of the children, so that a child may not harm oneself or be allowed to harm another person, or their property. As our school is able to excel in providing the four foundations for learning we have found behaviours requiring regulation intervention very rare. Our students are generally happy and healthy, engaged and able to express themselves effectively, verbally or nonverbally. St. George Co-op Nursery School fundamentally believes in the adage that it takes a village to raise a child. Local community partners are welcome to take an active role in the school if the school and the partner find there is a need for service. We welcome all input into the program and we open our doors to partners wishing to help support our children, their families and our staff. The teacher will set up appointments with these partners to make sure that times and dates work well for all of those involved.

Upon joining the membership of the St. George Co-op, all staff, participation parents, volunteers and support staff will review the program statement and all school policies prior to interacting with the children and at any time when the program statement is modified. Monthly, during our meeting, we will document and discuss any changes that need to be made to the program statement. Annually, all staff, participation parents, volunteers, and support staff will be evaluated by the supervisor to make sure that these approaches to interacting with children are being followed. If you have any questions or concerns about your child, our curriculum or activities in the school, please speak with our teachers. Any ideas or concerns relating to the administration or operation of the school can be directed to the appropriate member of the executive council, or the president. If you would like to address the general membership, please advise the president sufficiently prior to a meeting.

We hope that your time at the St. George Co-op Preschool is a positive and fulfilling experience and we are excited to have you join our membership.

At the St. George Co-op, all children are welcome to attend regardless of ability, need, background, culture, religion, gender, family composition or economic circumstances. Through inclusive practice, we aim to enhance the physical, emotional, social and intellectual needs of all children. We strive to make strong partnerships with families through open communication keeping the best interest of the child as a top priority.

**Our policy includes that:**

- No family will be excluded from the program, as long as we are able to meet their needs.
- All children may attend our regular days and hours of operation no matter their needs.
- Financial assistance through City of Brantford Child Care Services may be offered to families in need.

The SGCNS is part of the Canada Wide Early Learning and Childcare system. Our fees are broken into base and non base fees. A Base Fee is defined by the CCEYA - everything considered to be mandatory charge to a parent for providing child care, including everything a licensee is required to provide under the CCEYA. A Non Base Fee is defined by the CCEYA - fees charged for optional services - e.g. field trips, transportation - or any fees where a parent fails to meet agreement.

**Program Statement Implementation Policy:**

Children will be provided a healthy, nutritious snack during the morning as well as a balanced meal at lunch time. The menu is posted monthly by the supervisor so all members can see what their children are eating each day. We always encourage self-regulation in the classroom. If at any time a child feels overwhelmed or needs to be alone, a safe quiet place inside the classroom will be provided where they can be supervised safely at a distance. No child will be forced to participate in any activity that they are not comfortable doing. We encourage the children to be competent learners by following their interests and planning activities based on their likes.

During classroom time, staff and volunteers are encouraged to get down with the children and engage, build relationships. Parents will maintain open communication with the instructor, checking the parent information board, Facebook Page and Remind App regularly for updates and important information. Each family will participate actively in the operations of the co-op through mandatory attendance at monthly meetings, participation in specific assigned/volunteer tasks, fundraising and marketing strategies. Families will provide this service and value to the co-op regardless of classroom participation status. Through this active and interested participation, families are granted an opportunity to participate in our children's early education and socialization in a way that is significant and meaningful.

Our instructors are the leaders of the classroom and maintain several key responsibilities. Miss Sarah and Miss Kelly are primarily responsible for class regulation, implementing curriculum, maintaining the health and safety of children under their care. Support staff and volunteers will support the instructor and look to the instructor for guidance. Miss Sarah and Miss Kelly also work to maintain an open line of communication with every family through our parent information board located in the cubby room, email, The Remind app, Facebook and face-to-face interactions. The curriculum and program are living documents that changes each day as the children explore their surroundings.

Miss Sarah and Miss Kelly are the pillars of our co-op community and will be treated with utmost respect. If you disagree with an approach or technique being used by the instructor(s) or have concerns about the integration or experience of your child please arrange to speak to Miss Sarah and Miss Kelly privately, outside of class time, as the instructors are fully engaged with the children during class. Alternatively, members of the co-op board, introduced at the September parent meeting, may be approached to help resolve any concern, issue, or conflict. Miss Debb, our centre supervisor can also be contacted.

Miss Sarah and Miss Kelly are encouraged and supported by our community to take part in continuous professional learning. Occasionally, professional development happens during one of our school days. Typically, our membership will decide to take a field trip or make other arrangements to cover the day. This is decided upon by the co-op. Miss Sarah and Miss Kelly will come back and share the knowledge they acquired at the professional development with the community of parents to further their knowledge as well.

The teachers encourage positive interactions between the children and in the classroom. Approaching our students as capable, complex thinkers, we are able to support the children, as necessary, through coaching, modeling positive behaviours and providing language to resolve conflict. We discuss the children's feelings, and the children brainstorm with the teachers what a more positive interaction would look like. Adults in our program provide space and opportunity for our students to resolve conflict and challenging situations and behaviours independently, with the knowledge that support is close-by. In the child's eye, the teacher is the consistent authority while they are at school. The instructor should be brought in immediately if a volunteer or staff support feels that the situation might escalate to require significant disciplinary action. During our first meeting in September, we will review and discuss the behaviour management in the classroom. If you have any questions about behaviour management in the classroom, please contact Miss Sarah, Miss Kelly, Miss Debb or a member of the executive council. Our greatest concern is that of the safety and well-being of all individuals within the program, and our focused engagement with the children allows all adults in the room to ensure that our goals and expectations in this area are met.

Each staff member, volunteer and participation parent will be monitored in our program yearly on the basis of the Centre's program statement. If the person being monitored is not following with the principals in our program statement, the executive council along with the supervisor of The St. George Co-op Preschool will work together to see what action needs to be taken. A participant may be warned or removed from duties based on the severity of the violation of the program statement and implementation.

## **Preschool Management**

St. George Co-Op Preschool is a community-based, co-operative/non-profit childcare program run by an elected volunteer Board of Directors (aka Executive Council). The Board of Directors consists of parent and community volunteers and meets once each month during the school year. The teachers also attend these meetings. This process allows the Board members and the teachers to monitor whether the objectives of the program are being achieved, resolve any matters of concern, and make changes to the program, where appropriate. All families are encouraged and welcome to participate in Board activities.

Board members serve one-year terms and can serve more than one consecutive term. Parents and community members are eligible to stand for positions on the Board. Only parents in good standing with the preschool will be active on the Board. Board members are elected at an Annual General Meeting. Current Board members, staff and parents MUST attend.

## **Role of parents/guardians in program**

Because this is a co-operative program all families are required to participate in and contribute to the operation of the school. A parent may be asked to withdraw his/her child due to the parent's failure to participate and pay fees on time. The executive council will evaluate the situation to determine what the circumstances warrant. Possibilities include a verbal or written warning, suspension and/or dismissal.

The intent of this is to encourage families to participate in the nature and spirit that a co-operative program is. It is only fair that every family shares the responsibilities of running the school.

Mandatory participation is required in the following areas:

- Participation Days - The minimum requirement remains at least 2 participation days per month. If the minimum days are not fulfilled, it may result in the cashing of your fine cheque(s). There will be the option to opt out of participation days for a monthly fee (\$40/month).

- Monthly Meetings & Cleaning - you are permitted to miss 1 meeting per school year. Any additional missed meetings may result in the cashing of your fine cheque(s). Meetings begin with cleaning the classroom and end with discussion of the meeting topics. Meetings will be 1.5 hours in length and the parent/family representative is required to stay the full time, unless it is an emergency or reasoning has been previously aligned on. Leaving early will count as a missed meeting, which may result in a cashing of your fine cheque. If a fine cheque is cashed, you will be required to submit a new fine cheque within one week of the missed meeting. If you are unable to meet the submission requirement, you may face the penalty of your child not being able to attend until the cheque has been replaced. Please speak to Exec. Monthly meetings are important for a variety of reasons. Since this is a co-operative, we all work together and therefore we vote on matters that are important. Being at the meetings means that you get your vote in on important happenings at the school. It is also a time to bond with the group of parents and get to know the group as a whole.
- Fundraising - the preschool relies on fundraising to meet a good portion of its financial demands; therefore, every family is expected to participate in the school's fundraisers. A buy-out option will be available for certain fundraisers, as defined by the Executive. We welcome new ideas for fundraising activities.

## Participation Day

The participant does not have to be a parent; we welcome grandparents, caregivers and others as long as they meet participation parent requirements. When completing participation day tasks, siblings and other children are permitted at the preschool, however they must remain under your care and supervision, because of licensing. Siblings are not permitted in the classroom during participation days when class is in progress.

Some families are unable, or choose not to participate in Participation Days, and therefore, a non-participating family pays a higher fee to compensate for hiring another individual to complete the tasks

Of course, all parents, whether participating or non-participating are welcome in the classroom to observe their child and teacher. Volunteering in the classroom can be a valuable experience for everyone and offers a special opportunity to observe your child play, learn, grow, explore, engage in new activities and interact with other children and teachers. It also provides valuable support for the staff and helps them gain better insight into your child so that their instruction is more focused on individual needs. However, siblings and other children are not permitted to stay at preschool on these days because of licensing restrictions.

## Scheduling Participation Days

Families identify the participant(s) and their availability to help, and the volunteer Scheduler makes every effort to accommodate all requests. Participation Day availability is to be submitted to the scheduler by the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month unless otherwise stated. The Participation Day schedule is prepared and posted on the classroom bulletin board and Facebook page approximately one week prior to the start of each month.

Parents are responsible for switching days with other families and advising the Scheduler of any changes to their availability, both long and short term (e.g., family vacations) in a timely fashion.

**Note:** Please be respectful of the Scheduler and the time they volunteer to prepare the schedule.

If you need to switch your Participation Day once the schedule is posted, please find your own replacement – a fellow participation parent. Be sure to update the Participation Day schedule by notifying the scheduler of the change.



The number of Participation Days per month that each family will be responsible for are dependent on the enrolment. If families have any special requests for Participation Days, they will be accommodated as much as possible.

If more than one child in a family is enrolled in a program, families will be responsible for Participation Days for each child.

## **Scheduling Volunteer Days**

For those who would like to volunteer within the classroom, volunteer interest and availability is to be submitted to the teachers. The volunteer schedule will be posted alongside the Participation Day schedule on the classroom bulletin board and Facebook Group.

## **Behaviour Management Policy**

Children are individuals and should always be treated with respect and dignity. We want all children at St. George Co Op Preschool to feel safe and secure. To ensure this, we set limits for the safety of the children, so that a child may not harm himself/herself or be allowed to harm another person, or their property. Limits are to be expressed firmly but warmly, and in a positive manner as children rely on adults to show them by example. Children's negative behaviours are to be guided in a positive, consistent manner, appropriate to the developmental level of the child and proportionate to their actions. Regulation should be designed to assist the child to learn appropriate behaviours and it should be implemented as soon as possible after troublesome behaviour. In the child's eye, the teacher is the consistent adult while they are at school. Please do not contradict the teacher in front of a child. If you disagree with the actions taken, please feel free to speak to the teacher privately after the incident or after class to discuss any issues you may have. Our goal is to promote self-regulation, ensure health and safety, and respect the rights of others.

In accordance with the Child Care and Early Years Act, the following forms of discipline shall not be used:

- A) Corporal punishment of the child;
- B) Physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent;
- C) Locking the exits of the child care centre or home child care premises for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the licensee's emergency management policies and procedures;
- D) Use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child or undermine his or her self-respect, dignity or self-worth;
- E) Depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding; or
- F) Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

The use of any means of corporal punishment or any other form of unacceptable discipline will not be tolerated. If a participation parent or volunteer contravenes the Behaviour Management Policy, an emergency meeting of the executive council will be called to determine what the circumstances warrant. Possibilities include a verbal or written warning, suspension (switch to alternate participation-parent or to Non-Participating Option), dismissal, and/or intervention. If you are having trouble with a child, even if he/she is your own, whether at school, or elsewhere, please see our teachers for help. As a condition of the Behaviour Management Policy, participation parents and volunteers will be monitored a minimum of once per year to ensure that they are following the correct procedures. Volunteers are not

permitted to be alone with any child and will always be supervised by an employee when with students. A volunteer duty parent, is permitted to be alone with a child as they take the place of an employee and are not considered a regular volunteer.

## **Registration Procedures and Enrolment**

To register your child in the program, all children must first be entered through the Brantford One List platform. Once you are contacted through the list, the SGCNS will invite you and child to come for a tour of the facility or invite you to attend an open house date. The SGCNS will provide you with a registration package and a registration checklist of things that the school needs in order for your child to be registered with the program.

Your child cannot attend until these requirements are met.

## **Withdrawal/Discharge Policy**

We are committed to providing a program that is inclusive and considerate to all members of our community. We take the utmost pride in providing a safe, healthy and caring learning environment for all members in our centre.

SGCNS will make every effort to work with individual families before the withdrawal of a child and/or their family. However, the SGCNS recognizes that there may be times in which it may be necessary for a withdrawal of services to occur.

This final decision would not be done lightly, however, the SGCNS will ensure that a thorough assessment of the child's needs, community supports available, and the SGCNS program's ability to support the child have been undertaken before withdrawing services.

Examples that may lead to withdrawal of services include:

- Non- payment of program fees
- Frequent late pick up
- Parents/guardians who exhibit violent or harassing behaviour towards staff, volunteers, students on placement, other children or families
- A child's behaviour is causing excessive disruption to the program; harm to themselves, other children or harm to the property
- Community resources for children with special needs are unavailable or have been exhausted
- Refusal by parent/guardian to meet with SGCNS staff and/or consent to use of support service for children.
- A parent's refusal or inability to abide by the policies and procedures as set out in the parent handbook.

When problems are observed, the following steps will ensue:

- minor infractions of the rules or behavioural problems will result in a verbal warning from the Supervisor and/or the staff and clarification of the preschool's policies; all verbal warnings will be documented and placed in the child's file
- a report of the behaviour or a serious incident will result in the Board of Directors being notified while ensuring the confidentiality of the family, as well, a written warning will be sent to the family
- the family and/or the Board of Directors may request a meeting to follow up on the written warning

- in the case of a serious incident, a plan that is mutually agreeable to the preschool and the family may be required before the child is re-admitted to the preschool
- three written warnings within a 12-month period will result in withdrawal of services by the preschool
- in the case of serious incidents, the Board of Directors reserves the right to withdraw services; if there are further violations of the preschool's policies during this period, the child will be withdrawn immediately
- the Supervisor or the Board of Directors will follow up with the Children's Services consultant, as required

Where a parent desires to withdrawal a child from the school, written notice must be given 30 days prior to the President of the preschool.

Parents will be responsible for participation days that fall within their period of notice of withdrawal. They will either work those days or be responsible for the substitute fee.

## Fee payment policy and payment options

The SGCNS is part of the Canada Wide Early Learning and Childcare system. As mentioned previously, our fees are broken into base and non-base fees as outlined below:

**Base Fee- as defined by the CCEYA - everything considered to be a mandatory charge to a parent for providing child care, including everything a licensee is required to provide under the CCEYA**

<b>Tuition</b>	\$145.20
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**Non Base Fee - as defined by the CCEYA - fees charged for optional services - e.g. field trips, transportation - or any fees where a parent fails to meet agreement terms - e.g. fees for late pick up**

<b>Optional Participation Opt Out Fee</b>	\$40/month
<b>Missed Meeting Fine</b>	\$50
<b>Fail to Show for Participation Fine</b>	\$20
<b>Late Payment Fine</b>	\$2/day
<b>Late Pick Up Fee Minimum</b>	\$10 per 15 minutes

Monthly post-dated cheques can be given to the treasurer before your child starts the program or handed in monthly. E-transfers are also accepted and due by end of day on the first day of the month. You are also responsible for one fine cheques (missed meeting). If you would prefer to pay by cash, they are also due on the first of each month. A late fee will be applied to monthly fees not submitted by the first of the month – a \$2.00/day penalty will be applied until payment is received.

There is a \$25 administration charge for any returned N.S.F. cheques, and this charge is due upon notification. If two consecutive cheques are returned from the bank, further payments must be made by cash, certified cheque or money order. Those with delinquent accounts of sixty days may be asked to remove their child from the program.

Subsidy is also available for eligible families through this website: <https://www.brantford.ca/en/living-here/ccle-financialassistance.aspx> **OR** search City of Brantford website for: child care subsidy

If your child is ill, or you go on vacation, full payment is still required to retain your spot in the program.

## **Safe arrival and Dismissal policy and procedures:**

The class runs from 9:30am to 2:30pm. Families are expected to arrive at least five minutes prior to the start of each class and a minimum of five minutes prior to dismissal.

### **Accepting children into care:**

SGCNS is responsible for signing a child in using the attendance record as each child arrives at the centre.

SGCNS is responsible for ensuring any communication from parents/ guardians related to drop off or absences is noted on the daily written record.

### **Where a child has not arrived at SGCNS as expected:**

1. Where a child does not arrive at the SGCNS premises and there has not been a communication regarding a change in drop off or that the child will be absent, SGCNS must:
  - Contact the child's parent/guardian no later than 10:00am. SGCNS will contact through the Remind App first and if they do not hear back within 10 minutes, they will call the phone number on file. If there is no answer, they will leave a message and ask for the parent/guardian to confirm attendance.
2. Once the child's absence has been confirmed, SGCNS shall document the child's absence on the attendance record and any additional information about the child's absence in the daily written record.

### **Releasing a child from care:**

SGCNS shall only release a child to the child's parent/guardian or an individual that has written authorization for pickup on file.

Where SGCNS does not know the individual picking up the child, the individual will be asked for photo identification and this will be confirmed to the parent/guardian/authorized individual's name on the child's file.

### **Where a child has not been picked up as expected:**

1. Where a parent/guardian or authorized individual who has not arrived by 2:45pm to pick up their child, SGCNS will bring the child inside and provide the child with an activity to do while waiting for their pick up.
2. SGCNS will contact the parent/guardian to advise that the child is still in care and inquire their pick-up time. In the case where the person picking up the child is an authorized individual, SGCNS will contact the parent/guardian to ask them to contact the authorized individual and inquire about the pick-up time frame. If the parent/guardian cannot be reached and the contact information for the authorized individual is available, they will be contacted directly to inquire about the pick-up time frame.
3. Where SGCNS have been unable to reach the parent/guardian or authorized individual who was responsible for picking up the child, SGCNS shall contact the other emergency contacts on file.
4. Where SGCNS is unable to reach the parent/guardian or another authorized individual listed on the child's profile (E.g., emergency contacts) by 3:30pm, SGCNS shall proceed with contacting the (CAS) (519-753-8681). SGCNS shall follow CAS's direction with respect to next steps.

### **Dismissing a child from care without supervision procedures:**

SGCNS will only release children from care to the parent/guardian or an authorized adult. Under no circumstances will children be released from care to walk home alone.

At dismissal time, your child will only be released to those persons approved by you in your child's file or with your advance written notification. If the person picking up your child is a person unfamiliar to the teacher, please let the teacher know before pick up time. Also, please ask the person to bring identification with them so the teacher can verify it with the name on your child's "authorized persons list" for pick up. A late fee of \$10 will be applied for every 15-minute interval the parent/guardian or authorized adult is late. (ex: Arriving between 2:30pm and 2:45pm will be a \$10 charge; arriving between 2:46pm and 3:00pm will be a \$20 charge; etc.)

## Absences

If your child will be late or absent, you must contact the preschool teacher no later than your child's usual arrival time. This will facilitate planning for the program. If your child is not coming in because of illness, it is important when you contact the Preschool to notify the Supervisor and/or teachers about the sort of illness that your child has contracted. This will help the staff to identify symptoms in other children with whom your child has come into contact. Refunds are not given for days on which your child is absent whether due to sickness or vacation, nor does the preschool provide make-up days.

## School Operations

St. George Co-op Preschool is a preschool that serves children we are 27 months up until 5 years of age. We operate from September through June, observing the same holiday and break schedules as the Grand Erie District School Board. WHENEVER BUSES TO ST. GEORGE- GERMAN SCHOOL, AND/OR BRANT COUNTY BUSES ARE CANCELLED, OUR SCHOOL WILL BE CLOSED. If we independently decide to close the school due to inclement weather, or in rare occasions of unpredicted staff absences, all families will be notified as soon as possible.

The school year commences on Monday following the Labour Day weekend in September. The school will, however, be open on the Wednesday and Friday prior for drop in mornings, unless otherwise stated. The purpose of this is for the parents to help with the set-up of the classroom for the year, drop off enrolment packages (if you have not already done so), to get familiar with the classroom, and gather more information.

The Preschool is open Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9:30am to 2:30pm, except on the following holidays:

New Year's Day	Victoria Day	Christmas Day	Thanksgiving Day
Family Day	Boxing Day	March Break	
Good Friday	Christmas Break	Easter Monday	

## Change of Address/ Phone Number

It is imperative that the Preschool be notified immediately of any change in the family home address or the telephone numbers at home and/or work.

It is also necessary to maintain the preschool emergency telephone numbers for each parent/guardian or family member.

## Communication – Concerns & Complaints

Everyone's input is always welcomed. If you have any questions or concerns about your child, our curriculum, or activities in the school, please speak with our teacher. Any ideas or concerns relating to the administration or operation of the school can be directed to the appropriate member of the executive council, or the president. If you would like to address the general membership, please advise the president sufficiently prior to a meeting. If deemed necessary, there is also a complaint form (Appendix A), which can be filled out to document concerns involving the operation of the preschool, an issue with the board and/or with the supervisor and/or employee of the Preschool. Forms can be given to an executive council member or Miss Debb to review and determine management. The concern will be reviewed by the Supervisor, Teacher, Staff and/or Exec and the parent/guardian will receive an initial response within one week of submission (exception during holidays and summer break). The response will include details of the views of the Preschool as well as any direct or indirect action(s) that might have occurred or will occur as a result.

Whatever the issue, we ask that you please do not engage in gossip as this makes for an uncomfortable and damaging environment. Things will run most smoothly if your concerns are addressed directly and respectfully. We aim to help each other out as much as possible, so that we can relax and enjoy our time spent with the children.

For day-to-day information, each family has a mail slot (cubby) and our parent bulletin board is located just outside the classroom door; both should be checked daily.

## Volunteer Screening Process

St. George Co-op Nursery School takes every reasonable step to ensure that no physical, emotional, or psychological harm should ever come to the children we serve. AS A CONDITION OF OUR LICENSING, IT IS REQUIRED THAT ALL EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS SUBMIT TO A POLICE VULNERABLE SECTOR RECORDS CHECK. Independently, each employee and volunteer is required to visit their local City Police or Ontario Provincial Police department and complete a waiver (Consent to Disclosure of Personal Information) allowing the police to screen their records for evidence of criminal convictions, pending charges, previous or ongoing investigations, and probation or parole status. The applicant is given a form from the police station, which then must be presented to the school. Acceptance to complete Volunteer days will be reviewed by the supervisor, depending the outcomes of this criminal reference check. If the results of the police check come back positive (indicating offences, convictions) the Charter of Rights and Freedoms needs to be considered as a person applying cannot be discriminated against. The supervisor will look over the police check and deem if the applicant is eligible (safe to be in a supervisory position with children). This decision is made jointly with the executive council and the supervisor if anything were to come to light on the form.

The Supervisor/ Executive Council would decide if that applicant would be able to do participation days considering these things:

- Nature of the offence/conviction
- Length of time since offence/conviction
- Rehabilitative efforts subsequently made by the applicant
- Specific duties, responsibilities and risks associated with being a participation parent in relation to the offence/conviction

If a person with a positive police check is approved by the board to do participation days, then a note must be made in their child's file. If they are not approved, the board needs to give reason in written and kept in the office, sealed in an envelope: Confidential.

Once approved, applicants can keep the original copy if they wish, however, the supervisor must see the original form in order to make an original copy of it for the files.

This process is a confidential matter. Once the criminal reference check has been submitted to the school, it will be placed in a locked cabinet that only the supervisor has access to. Volunteers and Teachers must supply a new criminal reference checks every 5 years. In the years in which a new criminal reference check is not needed, volunteers and teachers must sign an offence declaration form. Based on what the member checks off, the board will make a decision on whether they are able to continue doing volunteer days.

## **Snack and Lunch**

Each morning, we have a snack together after coming inside. The snacks will be nutritious and healthy, for example fruit or vegetables, cheese or yogurt, crackers or pretzels, or small sandwiches. A snack calendar will be posted in the classroom/ Facebook.

Lunch will also be provided to all of our students. Wholesome Kids Catering will be providing this lunch delivered fresh daily and abiding by an outlined meal plan in line with allergies and any special food requirement accommodation (vegan, halal, etc.). Food services will meet or exceed the Canada Food Guide, the Childcare Early Years Act and municipal standards.

We are a nut free classroom.

## **Children's Belongings**

We ask that you store a complete second set of (labelled) clothing at school in case of need. Please store it underneath the cubbies in a Ziploc bag that is labeled with your child's name on it. If your child is in diapers, the diapering items can be stored in your child's cubby as well. Any diapering required during class time will be done on the change table in the nursery room by a staff member.

## **Dress**

Please dress your child in comfortable, washable clothing as we do many messy, creative activities. Our program includes daily outdoor play unless the weather is too extreme. Please ensure that your child is suitably equipped with (labelled) coat, hat, mittens, boots etc. No child can remain in the school while the others are outdoors.

## **Child's Development**

If you would like, the teacher can use the Ages and Stages checklist to review your child's growth. You will be given copies of this screen once the teacher completes it. If you have any questions, please speak to the teacher about the screening process.

## **Birthdays**

Your child's birthday is celebrated with the children of his/her class. Please, do not bring balloons, hats, or loot bags. You are welcome to bring a special snack that day such as cupcakes, etc. with teacher approval and in accordance with the classroom's dietary restrictions as posted (nut free at a minimum). Invitations to parties outside of preschool hours are to be given out before or after class and not posted in our Facebook group.

## **Compliance with Policies & Procedures**

The staff, volunteers and Board of Directors are bound to follow and uphold the policies and procedures of St. George Co-Op Preschool outlined in this handbook. These have been designed to ensure a safe and productive environment that satisfies our licensing requirements and exemplifies the integrity of the preschool.

The Licensing Specialist from the Ministry reviews the preschool's policies and procedures annually. In addition, policies like the Behaviour Management Policy are an integral part of the fabric of the preschool, its philosophy and the program. Accordingly, the Supervisor and Board reassess all policies and procedures annually and review any proposed changes for discussion and approval. The Supervisor also reviews the Preschool's policies and procedures with new staff and volunteers to ensure they are understood and followed. Each year, the staff, volunteers and Board must read and formally sign-off on the policy and procedures, to acknowledge their full understanding and commitment to implement them.

Finally, the preschool is governed by a set of by-laws. The Board of Directors also reviews these annually. The membership votes on any proposed changes at the Annual General Meeting.

The supervisor and board of directors will monitor the staff, membership, participation adults and volunteers for compliance. If the supervisor and or president find that a person is in non-compliance, first that person will be given a verbal warning (Appendix B). Secondly, the executive council will issue a written warning (Appendix B). And lastly, that person will be terminated from their employment or membership with the St. George Co-op Preschool.

## **Criminal Reference Checks**

The Ministry guidelines state that all Ministries funded or licensed agencies providing direct services to children and/or vulnerable persons are required to have Criminal Reference Check policies and procedures included in their hiring practices. Criminal Reference checking is a precautionary measure designed to ascertain whether potential employees have a record of criminal convictions, which would make them unsuitable for positions of trust. It is in keeping with these guidelines that the SGCNS incorporates Criminal Record Information Checks into its recruitment practices. It is our commitment to ensure the safety of all children involved at all the locations that we operate. All prospective employees of the SGCNS having direct, unsupervised contact with children will be required to consent to a Criminal Reference Check. Criminal information obtained will be kept confidential. The Administrative fee for the Criminal Check will be payable by the candidate.



## Fire & Emergency Evacuation Plan and Location of Exits

In accordance with the Child Care and Early Years Act, fire drills are held monthly. When the teachers, staff, volunteers and participation parents hear either the fire alarm or the fire whistle, they will firmly but calmly instruct the children to line up immediately by the door and be counted. One staff will bring the attendance clipboard and a cell phone. Once everyone is accounted for, the adults will lead the children to our emergency location. If you detect fire, inform our teacher/participation parent(s) and follow the evacuation procedure as described, ensuring that all children are accounted for. Pull the fire alarm on your way out, or call 911 from a nearby phone.

SGCNS has an Emergency Management Manual that has a list of procedures that are to serve as a guideline if an evacuation and/or a serious event occurs (fire, bomb threat, utility interruption, etc). Final decision on steps taken in the situation will be left to the Supervisor along with the Board and Emergency Personnel. Should an accident occur, the following procedures will be followed:

- Minor occurrence: Teacher/participation parents will provide immediate medical attention on the premises and you will be advised verbally at the end of the day.
- Serious occurrence: An employee will call 911 for an ambulance. Medical attention will be administered by the teacher and without delay. The staff will safeguard the other children. The parent/emergency contact will be notified, as will the family physician. An accident report will be recorded. The Ontario Ministry of Education will be contacted. Details of the occurrence will be reported to the parents as soon as possible.

The St. George Preschool has emergency management policies and procedures. All participation parents, staff, students and volunteers must review these procedures yearly. As mentioned above parents/guardians will be notified as soon as possible when a serious injury, medical emergency or emergency situation has occurred.

## Field Trips & Off-Site Activities

Typically, our school goes on about 3-5 trips throughout the school year. For trips, you must bring your own child and stay with them at all times. When we are off site, the ratios change, so it is easier, if we are 1:1. It doesn't have to be a parent; it can be a grandparent, etc. Whomever you feel comfortable sending your child on the trip with and who is physically able to be take care of your child's needs on the trip. Payment for each trip is discussed at monthly meetings prior to the trip.

## Inclusion Policy

At the St. George Co-op, all children are welcome to attend regardless of ability, need, background, culture, religion, gender, family composition or economic circumstances. Through inclusive practice, we aim to enhance the physical, emotional, social and intellectual needs of all children. We strive to make strong partnerships with families through open communication keeping the best interest of the child as a top priority.

### Our policy includes that:

- No family will be excluded from the program, as long as we are able to meet their needs.
- All children may attend our regular days and hours of operation no matter their needs.
- Financial assistance through Child Care Services may be offered to families in need.

**Programming**

- With necessary supports put in place when needed, all children will be able to participate in the full program to the best of their abilities.
- We will work with community agencies to acquire any assistive resources a child may need.
- All staff members will work together with all outside agency staff to implement any recommendations/goals into the program.
- Programs will be flexible to accommodate for each individual child's needs.
- Programming staff will regularly engage with parents to facilitate information sharing and to ensure parents are involved in planning for their child's learning and development.

**Parents**

- Parents will be encouraged to contribute to our programs by providing information or resources illustrating aspects of their lives, culture or community.
- Parents will be encouraged to attend interagency meetings. The Preschool will strive to accommodate any requests to ensure their ability to attend.
- Supervisors will actively recruit parents that reflect the diversity of our families to become a member of the Board of Directors.

**Children with Special Needs Policy**

St. George Co-op aims to provide an inclusive active learning environment that supports all children's uniqueness, dignity and development. Children with special needs have the right to be included in all aspects of their community. Children with special needs will be welcomed to the co-op after consultation with the family, any outside agencies (if necessary) and the Supervisors has taken place and it has mutually been agreed upon that the St. George Co-op is able to meet the needs of the child. All children will be able to participate in the full program to the best of their abilities. Through regular collaborations a strong support system will be created with the family, outside agencies, supervisors and program staff. Any reasonable adjustments will be made to accommodate the child. Program staff will monitor the child's development and their progress in the program through observations and regular reviews on an individual basis. The St. George Co-op will aim to provide for any need that has been identified.

- Staff will work closely with the parents and use their knowledge and expertise when planning their program.
- The Preschool will work collaboratively with outside agencies to assist in meeting the child's individual needs.
- Any in-service training will be provided to staff when required.
- The child's progress will be documented and discussed with parents on a regular basis.
- Up to date records of each child will be kept on file: Consent Forms, Referrals, Home Visits and Assessments.

**Insurance Coverage**

*St. George Co-Op Preschool* has insurance coverage indemnifying the preschool for accidents or natural disaster. The policy also provides Directors' liability.

The preschool is **not** responsible for loss of property or clothing of its students.

## Orientation Policy

If you would like to come and look at the centre, visitors are welcome to come and see the centre. We ask that you sign the visitor guestbook in the kitchen as you arrive. Trial play dates in the program with parent and child are welcome as well. Please contact the Supervisor to arrange a visit, and a playtime to come and view our school to make sure it doesn't conflict with a field trip or holiday.

Once you have registered your child in the program, parent/ guardian volunteers will be required to review and sign an orientation policy binder if you would like to volunteer in the classroom. This binder reviews all the policies and procedures of the centre.

### Orientation of staff, volunteers and participation parents

Upon becoming a member of the co-op, all staff, volunteers and participation parents are required to read the family handbook, and the program statement. All staff, volunteers and participation parents will sign that they have read and understood these things. If for any reason a staff, volunteer or participation parent is not following these policies and procedures, the executive council will have an immediate meeting in which they will decide if the staff member or participation person needs to be warned, or terminated from their position.

#### Introduction of Staff and Participation Parents:

Staff and Participation parents will be introduced at our general meetings that are held on the first Tuesday of each month during the school year (September- June).

#### Tour of Facility:

A brief tour of the facility will be given when a parent comes to look at the centre for the first time. A more thorough tour will be given at the first meeting to show all the parents where all the cleaning supplies are and where different aspects of our school are located. If a participation parent needs help finding something after these tours, then they can ask the teacher and they will advise them where to find it or how to get there.

#### Collection of background information:

**Staff:** When you are hired, a file will be started in which all information will be kept in the office. You are to supply to school with a copy of your first aid certification, your diplomas, any professional development certificates as well as health records such as immunizations and background information. Also, the supervisor needs to be shown a current copy of your police check (including vulnerable sector check). Then the supervisor will photocopy it and/or place it in your file. As you receive new documents, please update your file.

**Participation Parent:** Upon enrolling your child in the co-op, all participation parents must provide the school with, fill out the participation parent package (in the registration package). If applying to be a staff backfill, you will need to provide a current Vulnerable Sector Police Check and a current CPR certificate. If you are not qualified for CPR, the school will add you to the course that it runs each September for new members. All information will be put into your child's file, in a locked cabinet for confidentiality.

## **Involvement in the Community**

The St. George Co-op maintains a relationship with the community by participating in the supervisor's networks, Fostering Brant's Growth and through a relationship with Lansdowne. The St. George Co-op has offered to have ECE Students in the classroom as well. We also maintain a membership with the Ontario Early Years Centre. The St. George Co-op also occasionally participates in community events such as The Kids Day Celebration, etc.

## **Health & Safety Policies & Procedures**

### **Allergies**

A list of allergies will be posted in the kitchen, beside the snack table and on the teacher's clipboard. If your child has allergies, please make sure you fill in the appropriate paperwork for the supervisor.

### **Dietary Restrictions**

If a child has a dietary restriction and the parent will be bringing in food/drink for their child, the parent will provide written instructions regarding the restriction and that the parent will be bringing food/drink for their child. These instructions will be placed in the child's file as well as be added to the Allergy and Food Restrictions list that is posted in the kitchen, program room and clipboard that goes outdoors. The food/drink being brought in needs to align with the centre's food requirements – no nut products or other allergen foods in the classroom; it also must be labelled with list of ingredients, child's name and the date it is brought to the centre.

### **Anaphylactic policy**

Anaphylaxis is a serious allergic reaction that can be life-threatening. It requires avoidance strategies and immediate response in the event of an emergency. These policies and procedures are intended to help meet the needs and save the lives of children with severe allergies and provide relevant and important information on anaphylaxis to parents, staff, students, volunteers and visitors at the child care centre.

This policy is intended to fulfill the obligations set out under Ontario Regulation 137/15 for an anaphylactic policy for child care centres. The requirements set out in this policy align with Sabrina's Law, 2005.

### **Individualized Plans and Emergency Procedures for Children with Life-Threatening/Anaphylactic Allergies**

- Before attending the child care centre, the supervisor/designate will meet with the parent of a child to obtain information about any medical conditions, including whether the child is at risk of having or has anaphylaxis.
- Before a child attends the child care centre or upon discovering that a child has an anaphylactic allergy, an individualized plan and emergency procedures will be developed for each child with anaphylaxis in consultation and collaboration with the child's parent, and any regulated health professional who is involved in the child's care that the parent believes should be included in the consultation
- All individualized plans and emergency procedures will include a description of symptoms of an anaphylactic reaction that are specific to the child and the procedures to be followed in the event of an allergic reaction or other medical emergency based on the severity of the child's symptoms.
- The individualized plan and emergency procedures for each child will include information for those who are in direct contact with the child on a regular basis about the type of allergy, monitoring and avoidance strategies and appropriate treatment.

- All individualized plans and emergency procedures will be made readily accessible at all times to all staff, students and volunteers at the child care centre and will be kept in the staff office.
- All individualized plans and emergency procedures will be reviewed with a parent of the child yearly to ensure the information is current and up to date.
- Every child's epinephrine auto-injector must be carried everywhere the child goes. The Epi-pen will be placed in an around-the-waist bag in which a teacher will wear each day the child is at school.

### **Strategies to Reduce the Risk of Exposure to Anaphylactic Allergens**

The following strategies to reduce the risk of exposure to anaphylactic causative agents must be followed at all times by employees, students and volunteers at the child care centre.

- Do not serve foods where its ingredients are not known.
- Do not serve items with 'may contain' warnings on the label in a room where there is a child who has an individualized plan and emergency procedures specifying those allergens.
- Any food, in which there are ingredients that a child of the school is allergic to, may not be brought to school either. Where food and/or drink is provided from home for children, ensure that appropriate supervision of children is maintained so that food is not shared or exchanged. Food/drink brought from home must abide by the details outlined in the Dietary Restriction Section under Health & Safety Policies and Procedures.
- Both staff will check packaging to ensure the snacks are free of allergens. Everyone must wash his or her hands using the hand washing procedure before handling food. This includes the teacher, children and volunteers.
- Encourage parents who serve foods containing allergens at home to ensure their child has been rid of the allergens prior to attending the child care centre (e.g. by thoroughly washing hands, brushing teeth, etc.)
- Do not use craft/sensory materials and toys that have known allergens on the labels.
- Share information about anaphylaxis, strategies to reduce the risk of exposure to known allergens and treatment with all families enrolled in the child care centre.
- Make sure each child's individual plan and emergency procedure are kept-up-to-date and that all staff, students, and volunteers are trained on the plans. Allergies are posted beside the snack table, in the kitchen and on the teacher's clipboard.
- Refer to the allergy list and ensure that it is up to date and implemented.
- Update staff, students, and volunteers when changes to a child's allergies, signs and symptoms, and treatment occur and review all updates to individualized plans and emergency procedures.
- Update families when changes to allergies occur while maintaining the confidentiality of children.
- Update or revise and implement the strategies in this policy depending on the allergies of children enrolled at the child care centre.

## Communication Plan

The following is our communication plan for sharing information on life-threatening and anaphylactic allergies with staff, students, volunteers, parents and families.

- Parents will be encouraged not to bring foods that contain ingredients to which children may be allergic.
- Parents and families will be informed about anaphylactic allergies and all known allergens at the child care centre through General Meetings and posting information.
- A list of all children's allergies including food and other causative agents will be posted in all cooking and serving areas, in each play activity room, and made available in any other area where children may be present.
- Each child with an anaphylactic allergy will have an individualized plan and emergency procedures that detail signs and symptoms specific to the child describing how to identify that they are having an allergic reaction and what to do if they experience a reaction.
- Each child's individualized plan and emergency procedures will be made available and accessible wherever the child may be present while receiving child care.
- The individuals who collect groceries on behalf of the child care centre will be informed of all the allergies at the child care centre, including those of children, staff, students and volunteers. An updated list of allergies will be provided everyone as new allergies are identified.
- The child care centre will communicate with the Ministry of Education by reporting serious occurrences where an anaphylactic reaction occurs in accordance with the established serious occurrence policy and procedures.
- This communication plan will be continually reviewed to ensure it is meeting the needs of the child care centre and that it is effectively achieving its intended result.

## Drug and Medication Requirements

- Where drugs or medications will need to be administered to a child in response to an anaphylactic reaction, the drug and medication administration policy will be followed including the completion of a parental authorization form to administer drugs or medications.
- The teacher/supervisor will be the only one to administer the anaphylactic medication (Epi-pen) in case of a reaction. Every staff backfill must ensure that they have an anaphylactic training session with the teacher and/or the affected child's parent before their first staff coverage day. All staff, volunteer duty adults and teachers will be trained in how to use an Epi- pen before they can in a supervisory role at the preschool. Once trained, all staff and volunteer duty adults must sign off that they have received training.
- Emergency allergy medication (e.g. oral allergy medications, puffers and epinephrine auto-injectors) will be allowed to remain unlocked, carried by a trained individual or carried by children with parental authorization so that they can be administered quickly when needed.
- More details can be found in the SGCNS Staff, Volunteer Duty, Volunteers Policy and Procedures

**Training**

- The Supervisor will ensure that all staff, students and volunteers receive training from a parent of a child with anaphylaxis on the procedures to follow in the event of a child having an anaphylactic reaction, including how to recognize the signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis and administer emergency allergy medication.
- Where only the supervisor/designate has been trained by a parent, the supervisor/designate will ensure training is provided to all other staff, students and volunteers at the child care centre.
- Training will be repeated annually, and any time there are changes to any child's individualized plan and emergency procedures.
- A written record of training for staff, students and volunteers on procedures to be followed for each child who has an anaphylactic allergy will be kept, including the names of individuals who have not yet been trained. This will ensure that training is tracked and follow-up is completed where an individual has missed or not received training.

**Confidentiality**

Information about a child's allergies and medical needs will be treated confidentially and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of the child, except when information must be disclosed for the purpose of implementing the procedures in this policy and for legal reasons (e.g. to the Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, law enforcement authorities or a Children's Aid Society).

## Health &amp; Safety Procedures for Circumstances Examples with outlined Roles &amp; Responsibilities

Circumstance	Roles and Responsibilities
A) A child exhibits an anaphylactic reaction to an allergen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The person who becomes aware of the child’s anaphylactic reaction must immediately: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● implement the child’s individualized plan and emergency procedures;</li> <li>● contact emergency services and a parent/guardian of the child, or have another person do so where possible; and</li> <li>● ensure that where an epinephrine auto-injector has been used, it is properly discarded (i.e. given to emergency services, or in accordance with the drug and medication administration policy).</li> <li>● Once the child’s condition has stabilized or the child has been taken to hospital, staff must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. follow the child care centre’s serious occurrence policies and procedures;</li> <li>ii. document the incident in the daily written record; and</li> <li>iii. document the child’s symptoms of ill health in the child’s records.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>
B) A child is authorized to carry his/her own emergency allergy medication.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Staff must: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. ensure that written parental authorization is obtained to allow the child to carry their own emergency allergy medication;</li> <li>ii. ensure that the medication remains on the child (e.g., fanny pack, holster) and is not kept or left unattended (e.g. in the child’s cubby or backpack);</li> <li>iii. ensure that appropriate supervision is maintained of the child while carrying the medication and of children in their close proximity so that other children do not have access to the medication; and</li> <li>iv. Where there are safety concerns relating to the child carrying his/her own medication (e.g. exposure to other children), notify the centre supervisor/designate and the child’s parent of these concerns, and discuss and implement mitigating strategies. Document the concerns and resulting actions in the daily written record.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>



## Immunizations and Health Concerns

The Brant County Health Unit, in compliance with the Child Care and Early Years Act, requires of each student an up- to date record of immunization against diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, polio, measles, mumps, rubella, and haemophilus influenza type b (Hib). In addition, they ask to be informed of any additional immunizations received e.g. Varivax, Prevnar, Menjugate, etc.

Volunteer Duty Adults and staff are also required to present proof of immunization against diphtheria, tetanus, polio, measles, mumps, and rubella.

Any special needs or health concerns that your child has should be disclosed to our teacher, and if applicable, the membership.

## Illness Policy

The purpose of our illness policy is to keep the spreading of disease and infection to a minimum. If your child is ill, he/she will be more comfortable at home and the illness will be less likely to spread to other children and adults in the school.

Each child upon arrival will have a casual, yet observant inspection as to his/her health. For protection of other children and staff no children should be attending preschool and can be sent home if they have the following: (Please note that these recommendations are not meant to take the place of medical consultation; a physician should be consulted for any/all of your concerns.)

- **Outdoor Play:** If your child is not well enough for outdoor play, they are not well enough to attend school.
- **Fever:** Fever is a sign that the body is fighting off an infection or contagious disease. If child has a temperature higher than 38C (100.4F) please keep them home until they are fever & symptom free for 48 hours
- **Diarrhea:** A child should not attend school if there is more than one instance of loose, watery stool. Children should remain home until they are symptom-free for 48 hours.
- **Vomiting:** Any incidents of vomiting must be reported to the centre. Children should remain home until they are symptom-free for 48 hours
- **Respiratory symptoms:** A child who displays more than one of the following symptoms should not attend school: fever, runny nose, persistent coughing, congestion, chills, muscle aches.
- **Sore or swollen throat:** A child should not attend school if they have a sore or swollen throat.
- **Rashes:** A child with an unidentified rash that is spreading and/or getting worse should not attend school.
- **Eye discharge:** Any child with white or yellow eye discharge, eye pain, or redness of the eye, eyelid, or skin surrounding the eye should not attend school.
- **Contagious disease:** If your child has a contagious disease such as Chicken Pox or Strep Throat, he/she should not attend school. Please inform the school or any contagious condition so the membership can be advised.
- **Head lice:** If your child is known to have head lice, please inform the supervisor/teacher

**FOR THE WELL BEING OF ALL OF OUR CHILDREN, WE REQUIRE THAT EACH CHILD BE WELL AND HEALTHY IN ORDER TO ATTEND OUR PROGRAM. IF YOUR CHILD SHOWS ANY OF THE LISTED SYMPTOMS YOU WILL BE ASKED TO COME AND PICK UP YOUR CHILD.**

## **Administration of Medications**

We do not administer medication on site (with exception to life saving medications or board approved). If a child is prescribed a medication and needs it to be administered at a particular time at school, the parent will be able to come into the classroom and administer it to their child.

If a child needs any of the above listed medication, they will need to fill out the corresponding paperwork and submit it before a child starts at the school. Only the Supervisor/teacher can administer these medications. The medication protocol will be posted in the classroom as well as filed in the office and on the teacher's clipboard. This information will be shared at our first general meeting of the year. More information can be found in the SGCNS Staff, Volunteer Duty, Volunteer Policy and Procedures.

## **Health & Safety Inspection of Outdoor Environment**

The staff will conduct a daily checklist of the outdoor environment when they first arrive to make sure that the environment is safe for the children and staff. The staff will fill out these forms daily. There is also a seasonal, monthly and yearly check to be completed. If there are any safety issues, they need to be addressed immediately before the children are able to enter the space. More details can be found in the SGCNS Staff, Volunteer, Duty, Volunteers Policy and Procedures.

## **Organization Operation**

### **Decision Making**

Although many decisions regarding the children's day are made by the Preschool's staff, general policy decisions are made by the Board of Directors. There are up to four positions on the Board of Directors.

Board of Directors' meetings will take place once a month or as need dictates. Any parent may make a written submission on any matter pertaining to the preschool at any time for consideration by and reply from the Board. Any parent wishing to meet with the Board is to make arrangements for a meeting through one of the Board members.

The following are, in general, the areas of responsibility of the Board of Directors.

- Decisions concerning the philosophy of the Preschool
- Periodic evaluations of the program
- Decisions concerning the hiring, disciplining and dismissal of staff
- Decisions concerning staff salaries and terms and conditions of employment
- Decisions concerning registration and fee structure
- Establishment and monitoring of the budget
- Management of revenue
- Decisions concerning operating procedures
- Policy development (all Preschool policies are available upon request)
- Resolution of conflict with staff or families which have not been resolved by the Supervisor

The Supervisor works closely with the Board of Directors with respect to all aspects of the preschool's management and attends all Board meetings. Should parents have any questions or concerns about their child, please do not hesitate to speak to the Supervisor.

May we respectfully remind you that positions held on the Board of Directors are voluntary and, at times, very time-consuming. We would appreciate compliance with the regulations in order to make their jobs easier and more pleasant!

## **Annual General Meeting**

Families with children currently registered at St. George Co-Op Preschool are voting members (one vote per child registered) of the Preschool and, therefore, have a say in the direction of the Preschool.

All members are asked to attend the Annual General Meeting, which is held in April. During the meeting, we review last year's minutes, reports from board members and supervisor, review financials, elect the new Board of Directors, and address any other issues that require a vote of the membership i.e. by-law changes (According to the by-laws 2/3 of the membership constitutes quorum and a majority vote prevails).

## **Jobs at the Co-op**

Being part of a co-op means in part that it is a co-operative and that each family does their part to run the school. At our first meeting of the year, each family take a job from our sign-up board and does that job throughout the year. If for any reason you cannot do your job anymore and need to modify or switch jobs with another parent, please speak to the member of the executive council. If you cannot do your job on a temporary basis, please reach out to fellow parents to find a temporary replacement and/or speak to a member of the executive council.

There are two councils: The Executive Council and the General membership.

## **Executive Council/ Board of Directors**

All executive positions are twelve-month assignments. Executives are required to attend executive meetings in addition to the monthly general meetings. Executive positions are voluntary and entail no remuneration. These positions are generally filled the previous year or during the summer months.

Any parent registering a child for a second year may be required to accept an executive position if one is available.

- **President**: The president is the chief administrator of the school and main public relations officer. They work closely with the teacher, executive council, and the membership to ensure St. George Co-op Preschool operates smoothly.
- **Vice President**: The vice president supports the president and performs the president's duties in their absence.
- **Treasurer**: The treasurer is our liaison to our hired, off-site accountant. The treasurer manages the financial operations for our school.
- **Secretary**: The secretary prepares, distributes and files a meeting report for all executive and general meetings. They keep attendance and make note to the Treasurer any family needing to be invoiced for missed meetings. The secretary also creates the participation/volunteer day schedule.

Please reference the Board Manual for further details.

## Non-Executive Positions (for General Membership)

Please note that any parent who does not volunteer for either an executive or one of the following positions will be assigned whatever is left over or to any necessary committees. A co-operative school means that all members play an active role in the school existence and are equally responsible for the success of the program for our children. Holding an exec or non-exec position does not exempt a family from participating in other support and volunteer aspects of the preschool operation.

- **Fundraising Coordinator:** The fundraising coordinator oversees the Fundraising. They ensure that there is a lead for all fundraising events and that all families participate. The fundraising coordinator collects monies and works with the treasurer to record revenues and expenses. They keep an organized log of projects with all related information, costs, profits, contacts, etc. for future councils.
- **Field Trip Coordinator/Graduation:** Organizes seasonal (fall, Christmas, spring) and year-end trips in consultation with the executive and Supervisor/teachers.
- **Grad Committee:** Coordinates the graduation at the end of the preschool year.
- **Maintenance/Seasonal Parent(s):** Arranges any major repairs and service contracts as requested by the executive. Seasonal maintenance such as putting salt on the parking lot and in front of the door as well as organizing other parents to help rake in the back yard, etc.
- **Laundry Parent(s):** Responsible for ensuring all towels, rags, cloths and paint smocks are taken on Friday, washed, and returned on Monday.
- **Scholastic Book Parent:** Organizes Scholastic Book Orders. Responsible for distributing book order forms to parents, receiving orders and distributing books to families.
- **Sensory Parent(s):** Responsible for preparing the sensory activities, as scheduled by the staff. This may include preparation of play dough, goop, water beads, etc.
- **Supply Parent:** Responsible for informing families of any donations SGCNS is in need of.

## **References**

These Evacuation Procedures were developed leveraging the Emergency Plan Procedures Manual | Early Childhood Community Development Centre of the Niagara Region

The Abuse policy was developed leveraging the following documents: Ontario Association of Children's Aid Society What is Abuse; The St. Lawrence Day Care Child Abuse Policy; The Village Children's Program Policy Manual; The Lakeshore Community Childcare Centre Policies & Procedures Manual.

## Appendix A

### St. George Co Op Preschool Parent Complaint Form

This form can be used if a complaint is to be submitted involving operation of the preschool, an issue with the board and/or with the supervisor and/or employee of the Preschool. Please feel free to approach a board member or the supervisor directly. Completed forms can be placed in the inbox for the Executive Board to review and determine management.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Complaint Details:

Please provide an outline of your complaint. Include relevant dates / detail of phone conversations or meetings / any explanations that you think are important. Attach extra pages as required (including copies of other documents relevant to your complaint).

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How do you think this issue can be resolved?

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*ST. GEORGE CO-OPERATIVE PRESCHOOL*  
*VERBAL / WRITTEN WARNING*

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A parent may be asked to withdraw his/her child due to the parent's failure to participate and pay fees on time. OR A staff may be given a warning due to failure of compliance to policies. The executive council will evaluate the situation to determine what the circumstances warrant. Possibilities include a verbal or written warning, suspension and/or dismissal.

Potential Situations Include but are not limited to:

- All persons in the program will be monitored based on maintaining the principals of our program statement as well as our behaviour management policy.
- Participation parent responsibilities in classroom
- Late pickups
- Late fees
- Monthly Meeting Attendance
- Fundraising Support
- Marketing & Advertising Support
- Exec/Non Exec position duties performance
- Participation in classroom clean up, move and set up
- Non compliance to policies & procedures
- Other situations as determined by the executive council

**A VERBAL / WRITTEN (circle) warning is being issued to the family of preschool student**  
\_\_\_\_\_. **The warning is being given to family representative**  
\_\_\_\_\_.

**Reasoning(s) for the warning issuance include:**

**Suggestion(s) to reconcile the situation going forward:**

**Failure to reconcile the situation may result in further warnings issued and/or dismissal from the preschool program. Being a co-operative school requires all families to actively work together and be equally responsible for the success and effective operation of St. George Co-Operative Preschool.**

**Family Representative Sign Off**

**Exec. Council Member Sign Off**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**  
\_\_\_\_\_

